book should be a Journal, and as far as possible a day by day record

There were difficulties in this arrangement Many records can only be dated approximately , and even with those which bear a date there is abundant chance for mistakes, especially m the first quarter of each year, because in the i sgo's there were three methods of reckoning the beginning of the year The regnal year, dating from the completed years of the Queen's reign, began on I7th November , the year of the Christian era began with the feast of the Annunciation—35th March , but thesj-eckoning of the Julian Calendar, which started the year on the iS^January, was coming into use Hence a document dated ist February, 1590, may belong either to 1590 or to 1591. This practice has caused much confusion, particularly in the dating of books, for unless there is some means of checking, either by an entry in the *Stationers* Register* or a dated preface, it is often impossible to tell in which of two years a book first appeared

With a few exceptions each entry in the *Journals* was based on a contemporary source, which is recorded in the Notes , but I used my sources freely, at one time borrowing phrases, sentences, and even whole pages, at another condensing or paraphrasing as suited my purpose I did this deliberately, believing that if the book was to have any artistic unity all the events should be seen in the same perspective, for it was my hope that the *Elizabethan Journals* should be readable

and not merely a work of reference

To preserve the unity of tone, and especially as I was as often trying to convey a mood as to state a fact, it was necessary to preserve a contemporary style of writing There was, as I well realized, a danger that the whole might smack of * Ye Olde Village Inne ', but the problem of how a historical work should be written is considerable, and especially when the author is trying to convey something more than information , and I agree entirely with Anatole France's observations m his *Life of Joan of Arc —*